

REMARKS

In response to the pending Election of Species Requirement, the Applicants hereby elect Group V, Claims 21 to 28. Claims 21, 23, 25 and 26 are amended for clarity, and new claims 27-36 are added. Given that new claim 27 and 28 depend from claim 21, they are included in the elected Group V. Support for the new and amended claims is provided in, for example, the original claims and paragraph [0165] of Applicants' published specification. (It should be noted that references herein to the specification and drawings are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention to any particular aspect of the referenced embodiments.)

The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement. No unduly extensive or burdensome search would be required to examine the various claims of the noted Species in the same application.

MPEP §803 states:

"If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner *must* examine it on the merits even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." (Emphasis added)

In the present case, it is submitted that the search for all pending claims together would not be burdensome.

Moreover, from the standpoint of costs to the Applicants involved in filing, issuance and maintenance fees relating to separate applications if the present Election of Species Requirement is maintained, it is clear that there is substantially more burden on Applicants by imposing the present Election Requirement than on the Patent Office if the Requirement were withdrawn.

In addition, it is noted that to require the claims of the various Species to issue in separate patents would result in inconvenience to the public by necessitating reference to more than one patent during searching, to review closely related subject matter.

Therefore, it is submitted that withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement is warranted.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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